

Green Options

Richard Oldfield, Editor

Late Spring 1987

Eight Issues per Year

Issue No. One

60p

Launch Issue

Welcome to the first issue of *Green Options*! This new publication will feature regular, positive reports on the spread and evolution of green ideas, including the greening of politics and of various groupings in society at large. Special emphasis will be placed on fresh developments in green thought or action, and the advance of existing green ideas into new, sometimes more "respectable" pastures.

In this election year, political commentary on the general state of the parties - and the implications or possibilities for greens - will also form part of our content. There will be occasional articles on green historical antecedents, and on popular current affairs viewed from a green perspective.

In addition, *Green Options* will act as a network information and contact source. The overall aim is to help in developing the strength, effectiveness and influence of the movement as a whole.

Yet does the "movement" actually exist except in name or vision? If it doesn't, how do we change that? If it does, how do we get it moving to better effect? How do we give it real "bite"? How is its strength and cohesiveness maximised, so helping to ensure that political, economic and social currents move our way? And what kind of strategies, what kind of organisational and political structures best serve the movement in these endeavours?

These are important (and

neglected) questions. An independent *Green Options* will seek to discuss and explore them by involving its readers and by bringing together writers, thinkers, activists and others.

A fresh sense of direction and realism is urgently needed. This is one reason for the *Green Options* initiative. As editor, I pledge to do my best in helping to create a new level of debate, one which investigates the various OPTIONS and looks for common ground. Within this, I freely admit to a bias in favour of decentralisation and local community empowerment.



A fuller explanation of the political context of *Green Options* is given on page two.

THIS ISSUE

- * SETTING THE SCENE FOR THE STRATEGY DEBATE.
- * DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA
- * THE GREENING OF CHRISTIANITY
- * NOT BACK TO THE SIXTIES BUT FORWARD TO THE REVOLUTION: - GREEN STUDENTS.
- * REGIONALISM TODAY
- * WIRRAL GREEN ALLIANCE - Green Groups Spotlight.
- * Plus News-shorts, "Events" & "Connections".

RABBITING ON

This first issue of *Green Options* comes to you in the early period of the Chinese New Year, Ting Mau, the Year of the Rabbit. This is one of the 12 animals which rotate annually in the 60-year cycle of the Chinese calendar. Every animal appears 5 times in this cycle, each time in a different state. In Ting Mau, it is the Rabbit-looking-at-the-Moon. The moon has suddenly appeared, creating a new pattern of light and shadow so the familiar landscape appears strange to the Rabbit. It looks up in surprise and interest.

According to Chinese belief, it will be a year of innovations and developments which will change our political (and other) landscapes. The portents look good!

NEXT ISSUE/HERE SOON

- * The greening of youth and young people
- * Down Under with our Australian cousins What are they up to?
- * The Green Alliance - who, what, how and why.
- * Bioregionalism - The Politics of Place.
- * The Green Party Conference.
- * Experiences of a Green Councillor
- * Coalition Casebooks - radical alliances in practice.
- * The Green Label - Do we need it?
- * Plus "Viewpoints" on strategies for the Movement.

Setting the Scene for the Strategy Debate

The Movement

The green movement is potentially very wide and strong. There are many points of entry and issues of individual concern. It is made up of people who, for different reasons, support various political parties or none of them. There are a vast number and variety of single-issue pressure groups, lifestyle cultures, alternative enterprises, interested onlookers, sympathisers and so on. These range through the spheres of ecology, peace, feminism, democracy and beyond.

Such diversity is a source of strength. Yet as things stand it is also a source of weakness. The movement in these Isles is fractured, diminished and diverted by national "machine politics" and by over-riding party and non-party dividing lines.

In Britain there are more green-orientated groups per head of population than in any other country. Their total membership is over 4 million. Despite this, the movement here has so far had little real impact on the direction of social, economic or political currents. The wide array of groupings do not, by and large, co-operate to the massive extent that they could and should. Nor do they always even recognise each other as prime allies. The general public, and much of the media, when they notice the greens at all, do not see them as one inter-linked, broadly cohesive movement, but very often as a "rag-bag" scattering of "fringe" elements.

The Challenge

In short, *greens have so far failed to create an effective political challenge*. Indeed, it is at least arguable that in the countries of Britain a green movement, as an actual movement, does not really exist at all except in potential or vision.

The old adage remains as true as ever: ***United we stand, divided we fall.*** Individuals and groups that seek fundamental changes in society will not succeed if they can be tackled singly. A new sense of direction and realism is urgently needed. This is one reason for the *Green Options* initiative.

The Options

So what are the main strategic options if we wish to create a united movement and garner the strength and influence that comes with it? The "big-party" strategy is one clear candidate. This centres on attempting to rally the wider movement around a particular party, one deemed to be the most supportive of green aims out of those which have a realistic chance of gaining power. The hope of course is that such a party will achieve office and measure up to its promises if it does so. Advocates of this strategy also hope, provided the rallying call is heeded, that the resulting mass "infiltration" will of itself considerably "green" the party involved. The *Young Liberals*, and the *Socialist Environment Resources Association* (plus *"Greens for a Labour Victory"*), being linked to the Liberal and Labour parties respectively, each broadly support this approach.

The *Green Party** approach, a variation on this theme, is seen by its advocates as a more focussed means of placing green politics on the national agenda, and of greening - through electoral competition - the larger parties. A further perceived advantage is that a concentrated forum for green policy formation is created. And with a different voting system, the small party of today might become the big party of tomorrow!

The non-party/cross-party approach is another strategic option. One advantage claimed for this is the avoidance of splitting the movement along party lines, and not alienating those who, for various reasons, oppose any party-political commitment. Thus a maximisation of involvement and breadth of support is the aim here, creating a strength which will of itself ensure green politics a firm place on the national agenda and influence the policies of the larger parties. The *Green Alliance* has adopted this approach, though numerical strength is not the aim in their case, membership being by invitation only.

A further strategic choice, *the* strategic choice according to

GreenOptions



Editor: Richard Oldfield
In-House Critics: Stephanie Leland & David Taylor
Published eight times a year by Green Options, 12
Polden View, Glastonbury, Somerset BA6 8DZ. Tel.
Somerton 74130
Subscription rates: see back page.
Printed on 100% recycled paper, Jimas Print: Unit 8,
Morlands Ind. Pk., Burnham Rd., Highbridge, Som.
Computer typeset by GRIC - Glastonbury
Resources & Information Centre, The Assembly
Rooms, High St., Glastonbury.

many, involves deciding between the centralist or decentralist routes. Centralist strategies tend to be equated by their advocates with simplicity, efficiency and the concentration of resources to maximum effect. Decentralist approaches are likewise extolled as flexible, democratic and focussed on the local empowerment for which, it is argued, there is no substitute or by-pass. Either strategy can be merged with the cross-party/non-party option, though this may be less true of the party-political approach since this rests ultimately on competition in the arena of national (centralised), mass, Parliamentary "machine politics".

The *Green Alliance*, for example, seems to operate mainly at the national, Westminster level. On the other hand, it is very possible to envisage the formal creation of locally-based cross-party - /non-party green federations (or similar) - a "bio-regional" Green Federation now being mooted for the Somerset Levels area, is one example here.** The *Glastonbury Green Gatherings*, various indoor and outdoor fairs (such as the annual *South-East London Green Fairs*), and initiatives like the *Wirral Green Alliance* (see "Green Groups Spotlight") are steps in this direction. And for supporters of the *Fourth World** network, any attempt at mass, national organisation, or involvement with mass political parties, is worse than useless.

The Complications

The strategy debate is not a simple affair. For instance, some believe it cannot be sensibly considered outside the context of our voting system. A fair system based on Proportional Representation (PR) - such as the West German "List" approach - might transform the currently

dismal electoral prospects of greens (standing as greens). According to some, this would make the Green Party's strategy a widely attractive proposition.

Others would maintain that with or without PR, the choice between a decentralist or centralist approach remains paramount. Some of these would translate the question - in party-terms - into a constitutional choice between a single Green Party (made up of branches from a national stem) in each country of Britain, and a plurality of autonomous (though perhaps confederally linked) local green parties. Others of a decentralist cast would argue that the locally-based, cross-party/non-party approach is in any case the best way forward, as a means of maximising green strength in readiness for PR, and/or as a worthwhile, much

GreenOptions

needed process in its own right.

Whatever the answers. It is no longer sufficient to just keep on keeping on, with little thought as the real possibilities for success. The options given above are some of the main strategic choices facing the wider movement. Which ones are green options? Are there other key political strategies not mentioned here? And besides PR, what other important, perhaps potentially complicating factors should be borne in mind? Future issues of *Green Options* will explore each of these questions in much greater depth. Your feedback on these and related questions would be much appreciated.

*The Green Party and the Green Alliance (and hopefully SERA, the Young Liberals and the Fourth World) will feature in future issues.

WILD & NAKED ?

Derbyshire Naturalist Trust has changed its name to Derbyshire Wildlife Trust to avoid being confused with nudists!

N. ZEALAND PACIFIC TRUST

The New Zealand government is devoting \$3.2 million of the compensation gained from France for the bombing of Greenpeace's *Rainbow Warrior* to establish a Pacific Trust for the protection of the environment and the promotion of peaceful development in the S.Pacific region. Meanwhile, the Soviet Union has signed the protocols to the *South Pacific Nuclear-Free Zone Treaty*. Guardian, Dec. 16th '86

ANTI-DUMPING DRIVE

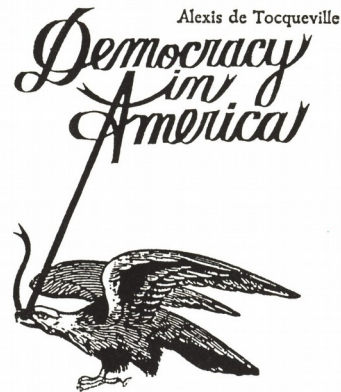
A campaign to stop ships from dumping rubbish at sea has been launched by 40 parish councils bordering the Bristol Channel. Daily Telegraph, Jan. 19th '87

VIEWPOINT

What is the green movement's current state of health? Where is it going? Where should it be going? How can the movement develop real "bite"? What strategies should we adopt? What kinds of political and organisational structures should we seek to develop? *Green Options* will sometimes contain contributions to a *Viewpoint* series: a political forum for various people to express their thoughts on such questions

ARE YOU A GUPPY ?

The jargon spawned by modern technology and lifestyles has given rise to New Words, a dictionary from Longman and Guardian Business Studies. You've probably heard of yuppies, but what about guppies (a yuppie with green edges), the branwagon, the vegeboom, or cordon vert? Guardian, Nov. 27th '86



DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA (a Great Political Classic on Local Government) by *Alexis de Tocqueville*

Over 150 years ago, *Alexis de Tocqueville*, a young French nobleman and astute political scientist, came to the United States to appraise the meaning and actual functioning of democracy in order to understand how it might serve to supplant the outworn aristocratic regime in Europe. This extract is taken from a book first published in 1835 (and reprinted here with apologies for the sexist assumptions and language). A future issue of *Green Options* will carry a report on the health and character of local democracy in the U.S.A today.

The principle of the sovereignty of the people governs the whole political system of the Anglo-Americans. Every page of this book will afford new applications of the same doctrine. In the nations by which the sovereignty of the people is recognised, every individual has equal share of power, and participates equally in the government of the state. Why, then, does he obey the government, and what are the natural limits of his obedience?

Every individual is always supposed to be as well informed, as virtuous, and as strong as any of his fellow citizens. He obeys the government, not because he is inferior to those who conduct it, or because he is less capable than any other of governing himself; but because he acknowledges the utility of an association with his fellow-men, and he knows that no such association can exist without a regulating force. He is a subject in all that concerns the duties of citizens to each other; he is free, and responsible to God alone, for all that concerns himself. Hence arises the maxim, that every one is the best and sole judge of his own private interest, and that society has no right to control a man's actions, unless they are prejudicial to the common weal,

or unless the common weal demands his help. This doctrine is universally admitted in the United States. I shall thereafter examine the general influence which it exercises on the ordinary actions of life: I am now speaking of the municipal bodies.

"... every one is the best and sole judge of his own private interest, and ... society has no right to control a man's actions, unless they are prejudicial to the common weal"

The township, taken as a whole, and in relation to central government, is only an individual, like any other to whom the theory I have just described is applicable. Municipal independence in the United States is, therefore, a natural consequence of this very principle of the sovereignty of the people. All the American republics recognise it more or less; but circumstances have particularly favoured its growth in New England.

In this part of the Union, political life had its origin in the townships; and it may almost be said that each of them originally formed an independent nation. When the

kings of England afterwards asserted their supremacy, they were content to assume the central power of the state. They left the townships where they were before; and although they are now subject to the state, they were not at first, or hardly so. They did not receive their powers from the central authority, but, on the contrary, they gave up a portion of their independence to the state. This is an important distinction, and one which the reader must constantly recollect. The townships are generally subordinate to the state only in those interests which I shall term social, as they are common to all others. They are independent in all that concerns themselves alone; and amongst the inhabitants of New England, I believe that not a man is to be found who would acknowledge that the state has any right to interfere in their town affairs. The towns of New England buy and sell, prosecute or are indicted, augment or diminish their rates, and no administrative authority ever thinks of offering any opposition.

"... the French government lends its agents to the commune; in America, the township lends its agents to the government."

Democracy In America

There are certain social duties, however, which they are bound to fulfill. If the state is in need in money, a town cannot withhold the supplies; if the State projects a road, the township cannot refuse to let it cross its territory; if a police regulation is made by the State, it must be enforced by the town; if a uniform system of public instruction is enacted, every town is bound to establish the schools which the law ordains. When I come to speak of the administration of the law in the United States I shall point out how, and by what means, the townships are compelled to obey in these different cases: I here merely show the existence of the obligation. Strict as this obligation is, the government of the State imposes it in principle only, and in its performance the township resumes all its independent rights. Thus, taxes are voted by the State, but they are levied and collected by the township; the establishment of a school is obligatory, but the township builds, pays, and superintends it. In France, the state collector receives the local imposts; in America, the town collector receives the taxes of the State. Thus the French government lends its agents to the commune; in America, the township lends its agents to the government. This alone shows how widely the two nations differ.

"Each generation has a right to choose for itself the form of government it believes the most promotive of its happiness A generation holds all the rights and powers their predecessors once held and may change their laws and institutions to suit themselves"
Thomas Jefferson

Spirit of the Townships of New England

In America, not only do municipal bodies exist, but they are kept alive and supported, by town

spirit. The township of New England possesses two advantages, which strongly excite the interest of mankind, - namely independence and authority. Its sphere is limited, indeed; but within that sphere, its action is unrestrained. This independence alone gives it a real importance, which its extent and population would not ensure.

"Without power and independence, a town may have good subjects, but it can have no active citizens."

It is to be remembered, too, that the affections of men generally turn towards power. Patriotism is not durable in a conquered nation. The New-Englander is attached to his township, not so much because he was born in it, but because it is a free and strong community, of which he is a member, and which deserves the care spent in managing it. In Europe, the absence of local public spirit is a frequent subject of regret to those who are in power; everyone agrees that there is no surer guaranty of order and tranquillity, and yet nothing is more difficult to create. If the municipal bodies were made powerful and independent, it is feared that they would become too strong, and expose the state to anarchy. Yet, without power and independence, a town may contain good subjects, but it can have no active citizens.

Another important fact is that the township of New England is so constituted as to excite the warmest of human affections, without arousing the ambitious passions of the heart of man. The officers of the county are not elected, and their authority is very limited. Even the State is only a second rate community whose

tranquil and obscure administration offers no inducement sufficient to draw men away from the homes of their interests into the turmoil of public affairs. The Federal Government confers power and honour on the men who conduct it; but these individuals can never be very numerous. The high station of the Presidency can only be reached at an advance period of life; and the other Federal functionaries of a high class are generally men who have been favoured by good luck, or have been distinguished in some other career. Such cannot be the permanent aim of the ambitious. But the township, at the centre of the ordinary relations of life, serves as a field for the desire of public esteem, the want of exciting interest, and the taste for authority and popularity; and the passions which commonly embroil society change their character, when they find a vent so near the domestic hearth and the family circle.

The State is only a second rate community whose tranquil and obscure administration offers no inducement sufficient to draw men away from their homes.

In the American townships, power has been disseminated with admirable skill, for the purpose of interesting the greatest possible number of persons in the common weal. Independently of the voters, who are from time to time called into action, the power is divided among innumerable functionaries and officers, who all, in their several spheres, represent the powerful community in whose name they act. The local administration thus affords an unfailing source of profit and interest to a vast number of individuals.

Democracy In America

The American system, which divides the local authority among so many citizens, does not scruple to multiply the functions of the town officers. For in the United States, it is believed, and with truth, that patriotism is a kind of devotion which is strengthened by ritual observance. In this manner, the activity of the township is continually perceptible; it is daily manifested in the fulfilment of a duty, in the exercise of a right; and a constant though gentle motion is thus kept up in society, which animates without disturbing it. The American attaches himself to his little community for the same reason that the mountaineer clings to his hills, because the characteristic features of his country are there more distinctly marked; it has a more striking physiognomy.

"England formerly governed the mass of the colonies; but the people were always sovereign in the township, where its rule is not only an ancient, but a primitive state."

The existence of the townships of New England is, in general, a happy one. Their government is suited to their tastes, and chosen by themselves. In the midst of the profound peace and general comfort which reign in America, the commotions of municipal life are infrequent. The conduct of local business is easy. The political education of the people has long been complete; say rather that it was complete, when the people first set foot upon the soil. In New England, no tradition exists of a distinction of ranks; no portion of the community is tempted to oppress the remainder; and the wrongs which may injure isolated

individuals are forgotten in the general contentment which prevails. If the government has faults (and no doubt it would be easy to point out some) they do not attract notice, for the government really emanates from those it governs, and whether it acts ill or well, this fact casts a protecting spell of parental pride over its demerits. Besides, they have nothing wherewith to compare it. England formerly governed the mass of the colonies; but the people were always sovereign in the township, where its rule is not only an ancient, but a primitive state.

The native of New England is attached to his township because it is independent and free: this co-operation in its affairs ensures his attachment to its interest; the well-being it affords him secures his affection; and its welfare is the aim of his ambition and of his future exertions. He takes a part in every occurrence in the place; he practices the art of government in the small sphere within his reach; he accustoms himself to those forms without which liberty can only advance by revolutions; he imbibes their spirit; he acquires a taste for order, comprehends the balance of powers, and collects clear practical notions on the nature of his duties and the extent of his rights

With thanks to Peter Etherden of Cambridge, Massachusetts, U.S.A - Tutor in Philosophy, Politics and Economics for the Open University of the Fourth World - for sending this text.

RIGHTWING CRECHE

Rightwing MP, *Mr Peter Bruinvels*, father of a tenmonth old baby daughter, wants the Tories to lay on a creche, just like greenies, or the "Loony Left" at Labour Conferences.
Guardian Oct. 10th '86

TAX CREDIT FOR PEACE

The Oregon state government (N.W USA) is offering a 30% tax credit to companies which convert from the production of nuclear weapons to peaceful products. The aim is to phase out completely the production of nuclear weapon components in Oregon by 1990. December issue of the *Fellowship of Reconciliation's "Reconciliation Quarterly"*

RECLAIMING POLITICS

What does "politics" actually mean? How has this become corrupted, a term of abuse? How do we *reclaim* a politics which many regard as hijacked by the central government machine/Parliamentary process (the grotesque centralisation, party "whips", Whitehall dictat, the adversarial structures etc.)? Future issues of *Green Options* will contain occasional contributions on the theme of *"Reclaiming Politics"*. Please write if this might include something from you.

COMPULSORY TAI CHI

Herbalism and acupuncture are enjoying an officially-backed revival in China, reducing demand for expensive, Western-style operations and drugs. The practice of Tai Chi is *compulsory* for recuperating patients.

BALTIC CLEAN-UP

The *Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission*, a combined East-West body which has representatives from all countries bordering that sea, has made its first ecological assessment of the Baltic since 1980. Its report said there had been a decrease in concentrations of DDT in fish and birds, and of PCB (poly-chlorinated biphenyl, an organic pollutant) in many areas and species. Metal concentrations had been reduced to those deemed natural in open waters such as the N.Atlantic. This progress stems from the implementation of the 56 recommendations devised in the last 12 years by the Commission and an earlier interim body. The progress charted could provide guidance for Britain and its North Sea neighbours.
Independent, Oct.31st '86

Green Groups "Spotlight" - Wirral Green Alliance

A Green Groups "Spotlight" will be a regular feature of *Green Options*. It will focus each time on a particular local group, network or alliance. Green Groups (Alliances etc.) are defined here as non-party/cross-party groupings (that use the green label) so structured as to embrace a wider circle of support and involvement than might otherwise be the case. If your grouping adopts a similar approach, please get in touch with a view to featuring in a future "Spotlight".

Wirral Green Alliance is a coalition of groups and individuals working together for a more peaceful, humane and harmonious society locally and it was founded in 1985, largely at the instigation of local *Green Party* activists. Its original aims were to "facilitate contacts and co-operation" between local green organisations, to enable the sharing of activities and create the possibilities of mutual aid and co-ordinated campaigns.

In order to meet these early aims it produced a Green Directory listing the original eighteen contributing groups, and established a quarterly meeting at which individuals and groups representatives shared details of forthcoming activities which were compiled into a regularly circulated list of events.

The Alliance, which is a non-party-political organisation

(though highly political nevertheless, I would have thought - Editor), is open to all groups and individuals who subscribe to its basic aims as expressed in its charter. This covers peace issues, access to the countryside, limiting urban sprawl and industrialisation, pesticides, pollution, the urban and rural environment, health, inner cities, organic farming, participatory democracy and decentralisation, animal rights, world hunger and disease, spirituality, justice, anti-racism, anti-sexism and materialism, and resources protection.

In 1986 The Alliance expanded its activities, becoming successfully involved in a number of local campaigns local planning appeals and banning hunting on council-owned land for example. It also began to reach out to a wider public. Taking its inspiration from the example of the Green Collective's *Green Gatherings* and the *Green Field* at the Glastonbury CND Festival, it organised Wirral's first Green Fayre in July '86. This event, held in a municipal park, offered members of the public (attendance 3-4000) a chance to sample green philosophy with some 50 + stalls, workshops, play space, music etc. This success was followed by a Green Alternative Christmas Fayre - encompassing the elements of the "Summer Fayre" in an indoor venue - which again aimed at sharing the green message of the possibility of a cruelty-free, non-commercial Christmas.



1987 looks set to be even more active. We have already held a major public meeting in Birkenhead on "The Politics of Nuclear Power" (Feb. 25th), and plan a "Healthy Living Fayre" planned for April, with the possibility of a two-day Fayre in the summer.

Continued efforts will be made to support and express the campaigns and interests of green groups and individuals on the Wirral, and it is hoped to expand the events calendar into a regular newsletter in the not-too-distant-future.

A contact address for the Wirral Green Alliance is given on the Network Listings page.

* A short history of the Green Collective (including the Green Gatherings, the Green Field etc.) will feature in the Green Groups "Spotlight" of a future issue.

GREEN POLITICS COURSE

The City of London Polytechnic is running a green politics course lasting ten weeks. Details: Dept. of Sociology, Old Castle St., London E1 7NT Tel. 01-283-1030 Ext. 541

HELP! DISTRIBUTORS WANTED

Green Options is looking for people to help distribute copies in their locality. All offers of assistance, as well as information on possible sales outlets - bookshops, community centres, cafes etc. - gratefully received.

Greetings and best wishes to Green Options from 4th World News (GO will be featuring the 4th World network - 24 Abercorn Pl., London - in a future issue).

A BIT LATE ??

One *James Bellini*, former colleague of *Herman Kahn*, the "father" of futurology at the Hudson Institute, and analyst of emerging trends, has predicted a major toxic catastrophe, with the environment becoming a major political issue within five years. *Times*, Dec. 30th '86. *Futurology?* Following *Seveso*, *Bhopal*, *Three Mile Island* & *Chernobyl*, and given the scramble of rival parties to green their image, it sounds more like *pastology*!

The Greening of Christianity

by Judith Pritchard, Secretary of the *Christian Ecology Group*



The *Movement for the Ordination of Women* goes from strength to strength. Nuns, priests and monks, with the express support of at least three bishops, daub Christian slogans and symbols on Ministry of Defence buildings in Whitehall. Another bishop, Dr. David Jenkins of Durham, says "My ideas are still tentative but they tie into the so-called new (ie. green) economics" (*Guardian*, Nov. 11th '86).

Witness also this extract from "*Faith In the City*", a report by a Commission of the Archbishop of Canterbury: "It is often said, for instance, that the first priority for our economic system is the creation of wealth But (this) must go hand in hand with just distribution. The product must have some intrinsic value, and its production must have due regard to social and ecological consequences ... There is a strong Christian tradition which encourages individuals to live simply themselves and to apply the residue of their income to the good of others ... Again and again in the history of the Church an encounter with suffering and deprivation ... has impelled church men and women to resort to political action."

Clearly dramatic changes are signalled within the Christian churches in Britain. The article below is the first of several, by different writers, which look at various aspects and signs of these changes.

By and large what is nowadays termed "ecological concern" has not been a matter for the Church hierarchy. But there has never been a shortage of individuals wanting to proclaim the wonders of nature and the love of the Creator for all created beings. St. Francis of Assisi, with a less well-known movement preceding him, is the pre-eminent example. There have been others, such as the saints of the Celtic church. And Sean MacDonagh, in a recently published book - "*Care for the Earth*" (Pub. by Geoffrey Chapman) quotes from the extensive poetry of Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1178) celebrating her love for Mother Earth.

Sean MacDonagh describes how the new philosophy of the Enlightenment destroyed the old holistic vision entertained by the mediaeval church. Scientific discoveries and technological invention put paid to the sense of the inter-connectedness of all living beings, and relegated all "sub-human" species to the status of machines. As far as I am aware, few voices were raised in protest (with the possible exception of William Blake and the followers of Emmanuel Swedenborg) until, after World War I, a growing sense of the failure of industrial society led a group of progressive Catholic thinkers, which included G.K. Chesterton, Hilaire Belloc and Eric Gill, to form the *Distributist League*. Originally inspired by the encyclical *Rerum Novarum* of Pope Leo XIII (1891), their aims included wealth re-distribution through widespread ownership of

land. One of their number, Arthur Penty, wrote "It is sheer folly, to say the least, to commit ourselves to methods of production and transport that depend upon supplies that are limited. For under such circumstances our position will become desperate as natural resources tend to become exhausted" (I am indebted to Peter Bolwell for the above quotation and accompanying information).

The thinking of the Distributist League influenced the next generation of Catholics, prominent amongst whom were E.F. Schumacher and Barbara Ward. There is a debt owed to both: to Schumacher's *Small is Beautiful* especially its chapter on Bhuddist Economics, and to Barbara Ward's *Only One Earth*, originally compiled as a series of pre-conference papers for the

first world-wide gathering of conservationists at the Stockholm United Nations conference in 1972. This conference led to the formulation of the *World Conservation Strategy* and the setting up of the U.N. Environment Programme (U.N.E.P) at Nairobi.

Schumacher, although a household name, is less well-known as the author of *A Guide for the Perplexed* (Jonathan Cape, 1977, re-printed by Abacus 1978), a book linking theology and ecology in an attempt to stimulate modern thinking about creation.

The French Jesuit priest and paleontologist, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, also came from a Catholic background between the wars. His influential vision of a continually evolving purposeful creation has inspired today's world-wide network of Teilhard centres. The London centre runs open conferences and lectures of a high academic standard, as well as seeking to stimulate the formation of groups whose members will be aware and active contributors to the holistic world society of the future.

These allegiances came from

Greening of Christianity

Catholics with allegiance to Rome. Within Anglicanism a forceful social prophet arose at the height of World War II in the person of Archbishop William Temple. His leanings towards the solutions proposed by socialism were well known, but how many people noticed the following observation I recently culled from a faded, yellowing paper-back entitled *Daily Readings From William Temple*.

"The treatment of the earth by man the exploiter is not only imprudent but sacrilegious. We are not likely to correct our hideous mistakes in this realm unless we can recover the mystical sense of our one-ness with nature. I labour this precisely because many people think it fantastic; I think it fundamental to sanity"

Had Archbishop Temple not died within months of taking office, I believe that the call for ecological thinking would have been advanced earlier than it was.

WOMEN PRIESTS

Finland's Lutheran Church Council has voted to bring women into their priesthood. Officials said the ruling, passed by 878 votes to 21, would come into effect automatically. The majority of Finns belong to the state Lutheran Church, though attendance is low.

Update: The Church of England's Synod (Parliament) has now also voted - by a more than two to one majority - to accept women priests though this will not come into effect for at least five years.

And today? The wheels grind slowly and none too soon, but are nevertheless not entirely at a halt.

1982 witnessed the celebration by the Franciscan order of the 800th centenary of the birth of St. Francis. The Franciscan leaders, gathered in their sacred congregation, produced some forward-looking thinking on ecological matters - published

in *Il Observato Romana* and relayed to this country by the Catholic press. The reigning pope declared St. Francis the patron saint of ecology.

During the same year a well-known group of secular Italian and European conservation societies produced *Terra Mater*, popularly known as the *Gubbio Document*, a strongly-worded call for a radical shift in attitudes and for six priority measures to arrest further degradation of the environment. The Franciscan celebrations died away, as celebrations do, and even the high-powered Gubbio Document appeared to have sunk almost without trace.

Until last year. It was the *World Wildlife Fund* (WWF), led by the Duke of Edinburgh (taken to task by the Times, incidentally, for expressing gloom and foreboding in public), which this time attempted to raise world consciousness about the global environmental threat. To mark the 25th anniversary of its foundation the Fund arranged a three-pronged event at Assisi: a spectacular pilgrimage, a week-long meeting of eminent environmental experts and a moving service in the Basilica of the Church of St. Francis orchestrated by leaders of five major faiths. We, the pilgrims, repented of having abused creation and pledged ourselves to work for conservation. The environmental experts published their report, *Conservation: The Need and the Message* (from WWF, Panda Hse., 11-13 Ockford Rd., Godalming GU7 1QU); the Assisi event received coverage on TV and radio, and a column in the Anglican Times.

For yes, the Anglican church is not without concern for the environment. Indeed, who is not experiencing armchair worry

these days? In 1970, its *Board of Social Responsibility* (BSR) published *Man in his Living Environment*, a report on ecology and ethics which was debated and forgotten. Then last year came a second BSR report on the same subject, compiled through the stewardship of Bishop Montefiore (Birmingham), generally held to be the most environmentally conscious of the Bishops (although true greens have discovered a kindred spirit in Bishop Peter Ball (Lewes), whose address to the (then) Ecology Party conference in Dover in 1985 was well received).

POPE PRAISES MAORIS

Maori culture contained many of the values which modern society was in danger of losing, the Pope said during a visit to N.Zealand. These included the traditional Maori sense of community, a profound reverence for nature and the environment and a willingness to share. *Times*, Nov. 24th '86

It is admitted in the foreword to *Our Responsibility for the Living Environment* (from Church Hse., Gt. Smith St., London SW1P 3NZ) that the board did not have amongst its own members sufficient expertise to write the report. So a panel of environmental consultants was called in, chaired by Prof. R.J. Berry, a board member. Even so, the resultant document is bland. It is an insular document, showing little awareness of the hazards of nuclear energy, none at all of the crucial part played by big business and high finance in exploiting the global environment, and giving only a perfunctory nod in the direction of animal well-being. Nor has it yet been adequately debated in General Synod (*the Church's "Parliament"* - Editor).

Mention should be made of an Anglican clergyman, Rev. Tony Hodgson, in starting the *Rural*

Greening of Christianity

Theology Association. Comprised largely of clergy working within a rural setting, the aims of the society go well beyond a purely conventional definition of "pastoral problems". They include a study of the Gospel in order to develop theology in a rural setting, and discovering ways of living in the countryside which embody a Christian response to the world. It is associated with the *Arthur Rank Centre* at the *National Agricultural Centre*, Stoneleigh (Warks.), a christian centre involved in developing christian principles in relation to agriculture.

As far as I am aware, none of the non-conformist churches have issued statements on matters of global environmental concern with the exception of the Quakers, who, in their own quiet way, hold occasional conferences* and publish articles in their *Quaker Peace & Service* bulletins. They have tackled such topics as the land question and ethical investment. A radically-orientated Baptist magazine, *Wildfire*, carries occasional articles with a green flavour, as does the Methodist publication, *Future Conditional*.

All modest contributions to the growing green movement. So too are the largely unsung efforts of individuals committed by their faith to tackling the global crisis through practical initiatives. Such as the clergyman from Milton Keynes who preaches the gospel of One World and runs a highly successful factory for waste reclamation. Or the work undertaken by Ramsey Shewell-Cooper and his son at Arkley Manor, Herts., the home of the *Good Gardeners Assoc.*, based on biblical principles of preserving soil fertility. This flourishing enterprise predates the upsurge of ecological concern in the sixties.

Better known among greens is Rev. John Papworth's sustained campaign for de-centralisation, and the magazine *Fourth World Review* which he edits. John submitted an incisive paper to the Archbishop's commission on urban priority areas indicating the necessity for political and economic power to be returned to local level.

Christian academics are also stirring. Five years ago it was almost impossible to discover any theological writing on the subject of creation and its implications in the ecological field. One of the first to take up the challenge was Rev. Andrew Linzey, chaplain at the University of East Anglia, who writes and lectures extensively on the place of animals in creation. At Cross College, Oxford, the *Ian Ramsey Centre*, set up for the study of contemporary Christian ethics (under the directorship of Dr. Alan Peacocks), maintains an environmental panel on which distinguished theologians sit alongside Jonathon Porritt, Director of *Friends of the Earth*.

The *World Council of Churches*, as might be

expected, is also showing concern. Its' *Committee for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation*, headed by David Gosling, has re-established a working committee at Potsdam. It produces a bi-annual newsletter and runs seminars. It is linked in Geneva with the secular *World Council on the Environment and Development*.

Space precludes more than a passing mention of the well-known involvement of Christians in the peace movement and in "Third World" projects such as the *World Development Movement*. Now, from the pen of one such Christian, Charles Elliott, recently retired director of *Christian Aid*, comes, praise God, a radical challenge to Christians in the form of a forthcoming book - *Comfortable Compassion*. The central argument of the book, he writes, "(is) with the first order question about the ways in which the powerful deal with the powerless - and vice-versa. I shall insist that this question is a religious one (and) this book is a plea - a plea for a fresh look, a radical re-interpretation, a new start" (excerpt from the *Church Times*, March 6th '87).

Not to be overlooked either are the Christian animal concern societies which, despite the massive apathy, born of ignorance, among the majority of Christians, appear at last to be making some headway. Friar Agnellus Andrew, who died recently, has made an immense contribution in this field. Another champion is John Baker, Bishop of Salisbury. He chaired a conference last January, arranged by the *Christian Consultative Council for the Welfare of Animals*, to articulate concern about the imminent *Animal Procedures Bill*.

For me, however, by far the most heartening thing to have emerged from the ranks of Christian Greens is the newly-published book by Sean MacDonagh already mentioned (*To Care for the Earth*). Unlike the several reports mentioned in this article, it is a book for the general reader. It should prove to be a seminal book, prophetic in its call to action if this planet is to survive into the next century. The author, a Catholic priest who has worked for many years in the Philippines, calls for a new theology and for expansive forms of liturgical worship embracing the insights of all religions in celebration of all Creation. It is to be hoped that non-Christians as well as Christians will look at this book, perhaps promoting it in libraries, or using it as a gift to friends.

* A weekend gathering with the theme "Ecology and Spirituality" for example.

The *Christian Ecology Group* has around 400 members. Contact: '58 Quest Hills Rd., Malvern, Worcs. WR14 1RW

Besides those dealing with Christianity (including the green historical aspects of Christianity), future issues of *Green Options* will also contain occasional articles on the greening of other religious/spiritual traditions and groupings.

REGIONALISM TODAY

David Robyns is Secretary to the *Regionalist Seminar*. His article below is the first in a series (by various writers) surveying different aspects of the broadly decentralist/regionalist/community politics "movement".

This article reviews the concept of regionalism as it has been developed in *The Regionalist* magazine and through the eleven *Regionalist Seminars* held since May 1980. It may be defined as a doctrine advocating autonomy for historic national and regional territories within a quasi-federal Britain or, more radically, a Europe of the Regions. Thus defined, this study excludes three related doctrines which differ in material respects from "regionalism".

The first of these is separatism, a view which in Britain is effectively confined to Scotland and Wales. The constitutional differences between separatism and regionalism are more one of degree than of essential nature, since separatists also envisage a *Britannic Confederation* to co-ordinate common functions and arbitrate in disputes. They differ in placing national sovereignty with the smaller entities and, more problematically, in their 19th century emphasis on the nation as the indivisible political unit; Scots and Welsh Nationalists also tend to be English Nationalists. Until recently there was no credible regionalist alternative to English Nationalism - the attitudes of Celtic nationalists are as much the result of ignorance as of principle. As regionalism becomes more visible, these attitudes are slowly changing. With their common emphasis on historic cultural identity, nationalism and regionalism perhaps have more similarities than differences, though radical separatists would hotly dispute this.

Regionalism must also be dis-

tinguished from the the decentralist policies of the establishment political parties - the *Liberals*, *Labour* and the *SDP*. All three are dismissive of historic identity as a basis for region-definition (the functional requirements of specific services such as traffic management or water supply take precedence) and are cautious in their approach to the scale of decentralisation envisaged. For the *Alliance* this caution is pragmatic; for Labour it is the result of an ideological conflict between decentralist socialism and more orthodox beliefs in the efficacy of national resource allocation. For the moment, the *Green Party* must be placed in the same camp.

"Tools of direct democracy such as the referendum and the popular initiative also have widespread support amongst advocates of regionalism."

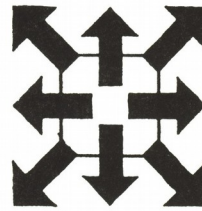
Thirdly, regionalism rejects anarcho-decentralist thinking because its unstructured (or indeed, dogmatically anti-structured) forms of decision-making are seen as cumbersome, ineffective and rootless. Yet although regionalists envisage a hierarchy of reference points from parish through region to the European level, they also seek to reverse the direction of this hierarchy from that prevailing at the moment, requiring instead the consent of all so-called "lower-tier" authorities to decisions of "higher" authorities which affect their interest. Tools of

direct democracy such as the referendum and the popular initiative also have widespread support amongst advocates of regionalism.

The movements represented at the *Regionalist Seminars* (and reported upon in *The Regionalist*) encompass the full range of constitutional political effort from electoral parties to pressure groups and action networks. Their composition varies, some being led by those with links in the established parties, some eschewing all contact with centralism, however benign its countenance. Their policies differ too, some having detailed programmes for constitutional and general reform, others seeking to influence the policies of other bodies, and some rejecting any enforced common view on the issues of the day. Any account of regionalism must therefore be impressionistic and not always applicable in all respects to each regionalist group.

"...regionalism is seen as a kind of 'fringe festival' riding on the backs of the more 'serious' proposals: the truth is quite the reverse."

The philosophy of regionalism pre-dates the movement, just as green politics too has its antecedents, and regionalism today is a synthesis of many currents of political thought. The Cornish and other Celtic nationalist bodies included in the orbit of



the *Regionalist Seminar* have been active for a generation and more. In England, two organisations exist, the *Wessex Regionalists* (WR) dating from 1974, and the *Campaign for the North* (CFN) dating from 1977 (the *Shetland Movement* (1977) and the *Orkney Movement* (1980) are also founder constituents of the Seminar). CFN gained publicity and support at the time of the devolution debates, but lost momentum when these proved abortive. The WR, after a long struggle to cast off undesired media derision, have emerged as a credible political party offering a coherent solution to their region's problems. However, when regional movements are mentioned in mainstream journals it is as a footnote to the policies of establishment parties; the merits of their own proposals are rarely examined. In this respect, regionalism is seen as a kind of "fringe festival" riding on the backs of the more "serious" proposals: the truth is quite the reverse.

Over the past seven years the *Regionalist Seminars* and *The Regionalist* have provided opportunities for regionalists to work together on issues of common concern. Though at one point it seemed that regional activities would be wholly eclipsed by an emphasis on regionalism in the abstract, designed to win favour with the establishment parties. However, efforts are now firmly back in the regions, with a renewed interest in identity and regionally-specific arguments for self-government.

"Regionalism is still a young movement and its most exciting phase of development may still be to come."

Yet the actual changes in emphasis are slight, and regionalism has continued to develop

along lines already apparent when the groups first met together in 1980. New movements in East Anglia, the Midlands and the London region are still awaited, to parallel those established in the 70's in Wessex and the North. Vagueness on boundaries and structures reflects the lack of time and people to research and collate information on top of more urgent organisational tasks. Regionalism is still a young movement and its most exciting phase of development may still be to come.

Long-term Commitment

However, regionalism requires a long-term commitment, and those who seek immediate tangible results from their efforts have rapidly come and gone. The need for perspective has the effect of limiting recruitment to those who already share some part of the vision; unfortunately those who do, often see their vision in non-political terms. The *Wessex Research Group*, for example, has twelve branches throughout Wessex concerned with holistic thought, but its input to the *Wessex Regionalists* is minimal.

The focal point of regionalism is the "region", whether it is defined by its supporters as a nation, a region or other area of community interest. Identification with the green label is resisted for two reasons. Firstly, regionalism enjoys cross-party support which an explicitly green image, still more so a Green image, would endanger. Secondly, the green label is universalist. Regionalism is about regional solutions to regional problems, and what is appropriate to one region may be anathema to another. The Green label, by being all-embracing, gives too little scope for regional self-expression and political or social experiment. Yet beyond this superficial level it can be seen that the rejection of

a label does not imply rejection of the idea, and there is no dispute that the majority of regionalists favour green solutions to their region's problems. In a regionalist context however, it is essential that they be seen as regionally appropriate solutions and not merely as applications of a universal ideology.

"..... power is based on trust, and if trust is withdrawn, power is weakened and ultimately undermined."

A number of leading regionalists have been drawn to regionalism as a means of achieving more sane environmental policies - it is worth explaining why. Planning decisions responsive to local needs and not to national ideologies are seen as more likely in a structure where national politics are excluded, but where the scale of government remains sufficiently large to enable comprehensive treatment of the problem. In the over-worked legislatures of the nation-states such attention to detail stands no chance of consideration. Scale is further related to responsibilities: remote rural areas suitable for nuclear dumping are no longer remote or suitable when their future is in the hands of their inhabitants. Responsibility must extend to the consequences of failure, and one reason for requiring a supra-regional authority is to enforce compensation claims against communities seeking to evade pollution control measures by parading the excuse of national boundaries.

Regionalism then is seen as providing the constitutional framework within which green policies can be implemented; to that extent it is already green as to ends; the greenness of its means has been imposed by the rigidities of establishment politics.

Regionalism Today

The resources needed to contest Parliamentary elections in Britain constrain direct participation, while the assumptions underlying political and administrative thinking are immune to pressure group activity. Yet power is based on trust, and if trust is withdrawn, power is weakened and ultimately undermined. Regionalism can proceed in the present political climate only by the slow process of building regional self-confidence, beginning with a recognition of shared identity, and leading through mobilisation on regional issues to a willingness to reject the legitimacy of Whitehall intervention and assert in its place the capacity of regional and local communities to evolve their own solutions.

APPROXIMATE DISTRIBUTION OF PARTY SUPPORT WITHIN THE REGIONALIST MOVEMENT

	Total	Active	Passive
Nationalist	5%	—	5%
Conservative	—	—	1%
Labour	4%	—	4%
Liberal	12%	40%	9%
SDP	2%	—	3%
Common Wealth	7%	20%	5%
Green Party	11%	—	12%
<u>Non-party: general</u>			
(Unknown + Independents)	0%	—	33%
Non-party: nationalist	10%	20%	9%
Non-party: autonomist	9%	10%	10%
Non-part: green	10%	10%	10%
	100%	100%	100%

This table has been compiled from the subscription and membership records of The Regionalist and the English regionalist groups. It therefore understates the numerical strength of the Celtic nationalists, although it does form an accurate statement of their involvement in the wider movement.

The Regionalist Seminar: 3 Asquith Court, Eaton Cresecnt, Swansea, Wales.

LETTERS

Future issues will contain a "Letters Column". Your letters are welcome, but please keep them as short, succinct and relevant as possible.

THE GOOD, THE RAD (ICAL) AND THE FAMOUS

Pop people, stars of screen and stage, famous writers and "personalities", as well as big-name bishops and politicians, all recently lent their names to a national campaign against the building of a Sizewell B nuclear reactor. They include Jane Asher, The Bishop of Birmingham, Richard Briars, Brian Clough, John Fowles, George Harrison, Ben Kingsley, Robert Powell, Pamela Stephenson, Sting, Pete Townshend and Linda & Paul McCartney.

Compared to the days when campaigning against nuclear energy seemed a lonely, uphill struggle, the range of names involved here is truly remarkable. A real sea-change has occurred, and greens can take a lot of credit for having got it all moving in the first place.

GUESS WHO ?

Who said the following? "Ladies and Gentlemen, you know - it's why you are here - that trees are living beings. Can they be said to have a language, a form of sensitivity? Some people claim they have and I myself believe it. They form part of the company I keep, of my surroundings. A tree supplies the soil with humus and therefore enriches it. A tree is a landscape in itself. We all need time for contemplation and reflection, silence and contact with nature. When a tree reaches maturity, it rewards the man or the generations who watch over its growth". The President of France, Francois Mitterand, as reported in *Earthlife News*.

BIOREGIONAL BIAS

The *S.West Area Green Party* has decided to explore the possibilities for organising on a "bioregional" basis. One aim is to generate more locally-based activity and encourage a greater degree of local identity. *Green Options* will be looking at bioregionalism - the "politics of place" - in future issues.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE INVOLVED WITH GREEN OPTIONS?

Do you subscribe to (or read anyhow) other green, greenish or even non-green publications? If so, maybe you could send in any snippets, large or small, which relate to our intended coverage of the greening process and/or new developments in green thought or action! Perhaps you're even in a position to take on some editorial responsibility? Or maybe you'd like to become a reporter/correspondent for *Green Options* in your local area? If you might be able to help in any of these ways, please get in touch.

Not Back to the Sixties but Forward to the Revolution

by Julian Edmonds of *Cambridge University Greens*

It is quite likely that many of today's students will be amongst tomorrow's "opinion-formers" and "decision-makers". For this reason alone it is important to keep in touch with attitudes and groupings within our universities and colleges. When voting analysis in West Germany has revealed that a larger proportion of university graduates voted for *The Greens* (in recent Parliamentary elections) than for any other party and that the main green power-bases are in University towns, then there is all the more reason to sit up and take notice. Hence the article below and the intention of *Green Options* to feature the world of students on a fairly regular basis.

"Today's politicians don't have to clean up this mess - they'll be dead! WE DO". That is how Green students meet the now fashionable view that young people are not part of the "real world" and have nothing useful to say, even in relation to their own interests. Most discussions of student politics revolve around the decline of student activism since the late 1960's, putting it all down to changed social conditions and the need to get a job. The Greens are the one bright spot on the horizon.

Students were involved in the Green Movement from the start. By the early 1970's many universities had *Friends of the Earth*, *Survival* or *Eco-Action* groups. Since then the number of groups and range of issues covered has mushroomed. Cambridge now has *Friends of the Earth*, *Green Party*, *Greenpeace*, *Lynx* (anti-fur campaign), *Conservation Volunteers*, *Creative Alternatives*, *Animal Rights* and the *Gong Appreciation Society*, a hippy cultural group.

Ecology and Green Parties have formed more recently, and last year started to make inroads into the *National Union of Students*. NUS has two conferences a year, at Christmas and Easter, to which delegates are elected from all institutions of further and higher education. There have consistently been around 20-30 Green-delegates at the last few conferences, out of a total of over 1200, and last year there were Green candidates for the national NUS leadership. One of these, Derek Wall, got enough votes to be elected to a part-time executive post, but did not take it up because he would have been alone on the executive. He made his exit by saying "NUS is a machine. I came to smash the machine, not work for it" and won a big round of applause from all those discontented with the controlling and immovable *National Organisation of Labour Students*. The impossibility of getting anything done through Conference tends to focus Green activity on the local level.

Opinion polls in particular universities put support for the Green party at around 5% of all students. It

doesn't yet get a separate mention in national student polls. In local elections Greens do better in wards with a high student population. But because most non-green students don't bother to vote, the share of the vote in student union elections is often much higher. We regularly get 12-15% in Cambridge. Oxford gives them 20-25%, but has no University Left block to draw the broad Left together under a separate banner. Greens have half the executive posts at the *University of East Anglia*. And in Manchester all the full-time sabbatical posts were won on a Labour/Green ticket.

Green activity usually revolves around a number of specific issues. Animal rights is popular, with campaigns to abolish unnecessary animal experiments in biological and medical courses. Peace and nuclear disarmament are important, particularly if there is a nuclear base within easy reach of the university. We have been very active at *Molesworth* and other American bases in East Anglia. Single-issue CND groups are declining, with most peace campaigners preferring to take a broader approach by working through the Left or Greens. Recycling campaigns often involve collecting waste paper on college premises (and all the bumf distributed at NUS Conference!). It helps to have an active local *Friends of the Earth* or *Green* group, as this enables students to have a useful input into campaigns to stop road-building projects, lobby for safer cycling routes or save areas of countryside.

The Tory attack on student finance and the education system itself is a prime concern for Greens, as it is for all other groups. The *Basic Income Scheme* is our major electoral asset. It counters the argument that we are demanding special treatment for students, and offers the possibility of working with all other sections of society that would be helped by such a reform.

Which brings us back to where we started, the present low level of student activity. This is all the more serious now that our basic human rights to

Not Back the Sixties but Forward to the Revolution

education and financial support are under attack. The latest national rally against student loans was attended by 1 or 2% of NUS membership, on an issue you would imagine to be of vital importance to most students. There is a basic lack of faith in any suggestion that the world could be in any way different or better than it is. The challenge that Green students face in restoring that faith is complex and requires an understanding of the recent history of radical politics.

The wave of radicalism of the late 1960's came at the end of two decades of economic growth, when it seemed that there was enough wealth to make all sorts of utopian dreams come to pass, if only that wealth was distributed correctly. Through the events of May 1968 and the anti-Vietnam war protests, the "new Left" came

into being. It felt able to go beyond bread and butter issues, and deal with a whole range of psy-

chological and cultural issues that the established labour movement couldn't take on, such as feminism, collective living, anarchic ways of working and sexual liberation.

This view does not fit the quite different conditions of the present. The environmental prophets of the 1970's have been vindicated and economic growth severely curtailed. There isn't now enough to meet all the demands from various sections of the left.

Thatcher has been successful by pointing out that wealth must be created before it can be distributed, and must be created in the most efficient way possible. Therefore we must automate workers out of a job, pay the managers more and the shop-floor workers less, exploit the Third

World, destroy the environment, have strong defences and use them to defend the interests of business so that we can afford to solve social problems. This is believed by millions of people who recognise that these proposed "solutions" are morally abhorrent, but see no alternative.

Greens are potentially in a strong position to respond to this. We start from recognising what real wealth is, natural resources and human potential, and advocate alternative structures of economic activity which, although less "efficient" in terms of creating GNP, meet human needs directly without creating social and environmental problems. We turn the world upside down so that everything is answerable to the laws of nature, not to high finance. Our vision of a better world is logically more convincing

"... student Greens must resolve a number of internal debates and tensions. The most important is that of whether they see themselves within the broad Left or independent of it."

than Thatcher's, and it is up to us to demonstrate it in practice.

To meet this challenge student Greens must resolve a number of internal debates and tensions. The most important one is that of whether they see themselves within the broad Left or independent of it. On most of the popular issues: CND, Nicaragua, Lesbian and Gay liberation, Greens agree with the Left and find it difficult to appear different in a short election manifesto. Many are content to work within the Left, others are put off by the rigid insistence on all the correct "right-on" views found in many student Left groups. Some particular issues are contentious.

The "No Platform" policy is particularly troublesome. The last few years have seen a number of highly publicised attacks by left

CAR OF THE FUTURE

A Chinese economy car that will run on fuels ranging from soyabean oil to diesel is to be produced in a joint venture with Australia. *Protech Capital Investment* said it had signed a letter of intent with China's *Jiangsu Car Company* to build the car, which will have a top speed of 50 mph and cost under \$1,545. *Times*, Jan. 7th '86

wing students on right wing speakers. Many student unions believe that the proper way to fight racists, fascists and sexists is to prevent them from speaking. This can get out of hand and be used to suppress any view which might offend the leftwing. At recent NUS conferences, *Pro-Life* (anti-abortion rights) delegates from Cambridge have been banned from holding

meetings, abused and even threatened with a knife. My own Green party was split down the middle be-

tween those who wanted to show solidarity with the Left and those who thought we should stand on a commitment to nonviolence and oppose No Platform.

A rethink on sexual politics is in progress. Students were in the vanguard of the 1960's sexual revolution and retain a reputation for promiscuity. But even before AIDS was a cause for concern, women were protesting at the violence and male domination that sex engenders, and demanding the right to say No. A strand within the greens advocates chastity as part of a less materialistic lifestyle, taking care to dissociate itself from the moral right.

Greens can get a certain amount of support easily by appealing to the traditional Left

Not Back to the Sixties But Forward to the Revolution

vote. But that doesn't really change anything and actually causes the apathetic majority to label us as unrealistic. To get publicity in the student press, and promote fresh thinking, we need to do something unusual and controversial. And that means annoying people and being prepared to take flak. Running a "Celibate Liberation" campaign or putting a banner up high saying "Flood Level A.D. 2050" may be misunderstood by some, but at least it's something different to read about, and the attention we get gives us the chance to explain ourselves.

The second issue which may impede progress is that of whether a green group should have any formal structure. Totally informal groups are preferred by the more radical and committed activists. The anarchic approach works well in self-contained groups whose activities are for the benefit of the people in them, or small groups with a single objective.

But a dogmatic commitment to structurelessness prevents the Green movement from growing. Having "organisation" is seen as "selling out" by some greens, but it actually allows us to do much more radical things than unorganised greens can do. A Cambridge group, *Green Action*, was attempting to be an umbrella for all other groups. But it had no profile or support outside a small informal group of friends and could never agree on action. Outsiders found it hard to get involved even if they wanted to. Frustration with lack of progress built up to an intolerable level and the group split. A *Friends of the Earth* group has now been set up, with a more formal structure and wider support.

All the time we remember that we are not students forever, and must soon face the question of earning a living. Greens are often

active in organising alternative *Careers Fairs*, where students can find out about work that puts the earth and human needs ahead of financial gain. Such events are of course limited by the opportunities available. There are still very few ecologically sound jobs that do not depend on some form of charity or subsidy. We don't want to be rich but we must be solvent. If the future survival and influence of the movement is to be assured we must take initiatives to create viable ecological enterprises. This is a difficult subject that needs an article to itself, but in preparing ourselves to do it we must never be afraid to be different, or be so complacent as to assume that the label "Green" is itself enough to confer uniqueness and superiority.

* See the *Green Party's Manifesto* for details of this.

ADVERTISING RATES

Future issues of *Green Options* may carry a maximum of one page (side) of adverts per issue. For camera-ready artwork, a full page (189 mm width by 250 mm) will cost £45, with smaller sizes pro rata.

An artwork design service (including near-typeset quality text), which can incorporate your logo, is available for an extra 5-10 depending on advert size. Inserts of leaflets etc. will cost £25 per thousand (i.e. 2.5p each). Contact the subscription address, or telephone Meare Heath 213 for further details.

WATER AID WALK

Bristol Waterworks Company's annual walk for Water Aid around Blagdon and Chew Lakes in Avon raised 3,000, nearly double the previous total. The Water Aid charity was set up in 1980 by the water authorities and companies. It supports, with money and technical advice, self-help water supply and sanitation projects in rural areas of the 3rd World. A high proportion of the 315,000 households in Bristol, Avon and North Somerset responded to another appeal by the company by adding a little extra to their water rate bills. This raised £38,000, a more generous response per customer than anywhere else. Similar appeals have been made by water companies in other parts of the country. *Central Somerset Gazette*, Dec. 12th '86

LAND FOR THE PEOPLES

The Peoples Land Group (Waterside) is exploring alternatives to conventional "ownership" as a method of land holding and management. To raise funds for acquiring land, members contribute 2% of their income (roughly 50p per week for the unwaged). This idea can of course be adapted to a

variety of projects. Any group with 50 local members and an average income of say, £100 per week, would thus raise over £5,000 every year.

Contact the PLG(W) via: 7 *Railway Cottages, Hardy Rd., Norwich, Norfolk.*

EVENTS



Green Gatherings (mainly outdoors)

May 2nd: *Leeds Greenfair*. Stalls, workshops, women's space, children's triangle, peace corner, discussion forum etc. Plus special focus on Nicaragua.

May (23-24th or 30-31st): *Derbyshire Green Gathering*. Contact Nik, "Green Peak", c/o Nik Gill, 109 Wharf Rd., Pinxton, Derbys.

May 25th: *Green Fayre*, Canterbury Gdns., Kingston-upon-Thames. Details from Des Kaye, 8 Crescent Rd., Kingston, Surrey. 01-546-187. (He is collating a directory of fairs/festivals organising groups and individuals - please send all such info. to him as well as to Green Options).

June 6-14th: *Kent Green Gathering*. Contact Green Warehouse, 50 Mackenders Close, Maidstone, Kent ME20 7JE. Tel. 0622-77043. This event is sponsored by the green parties of Kent. Cost #5 for map etc. of site. #1 per night per tent camping.

June 19-21st: *"Green Field" (at the CND festival)*. Involvement is welcomed in a whole range of activities: site and gate crew, cooks, creche workers, workshop people, stallholders and many others. Contact Kim McGavin (co-ordinator), St.Nectans, Welcome, Bideford, N.Devon.

June 26th-28th: *Wales One Earth Gathering*., Port Talbot. Contact Dav Devalle, Tyddlyn, Ynys Mon, Cymru. Tel. Bodorgan 978-402-39

Mid July: *Wirral Green Day*. Contact Elaine Corlett, 12 James St., Oxtou, Birkenhead L43 5RD 051-652-3166

Norwich Green Gathering (date unknown): Contact Third World Centre, Redwell St., Norwich, Norfolk NR2 4SN

Aug. 13th-19th (no site yet obtained): *Glastonbury Green Gathering*. PO Box 23, Glastonbury, Somerset. Tel. Glastonbury 32452. Suggestions are welcomed of possible sites to use (or even buy) near Glastonbury or in the South/West/Central area of England.

Greenbelt Arts Festival: A Christian event taking place at Castle Ashby, Northants. Last year this happened from Aug. 22-25th. For info. re. this yr. contact Green Belt Festivals, 11 Uxbridge St., London W8 7TA

Other events

April 23-24th: *TOES (The Other Economic Summit) "Future Cities" Seminar*. Oxford Polytechnic. Invitation Only. Details from New Economics Foundation, 27 Thames Hse., South Bank Business Centre, 140 Battersea Pk., Rd., London SW11 4NB 01-720-8674

April 17th: Easter Rally at Hinkley Point (nuclear reactors), Somerset, of the "Stop Hinkley Expansion" campaign - one year on from Chernobyl. Contact Nether Stowey (0278) 732921

April 25th: *National FoE/CND demonstration* in London to mark the anniversary of Chernobyl. Assemble 11am Victoria Embankment, Rally 2pm Hyde Pk. Contact CND, 22/24 Underwood Rd., London N1 7NG 01-250-4010

April/May: *Workshops at the New University* on organic gardening, green politics, practical skills, health/medicine and radical education. The N.U. Project, 24 South Rd., Hockley, Birmingham, 18

May 2nd, 10am-5pm: *TOES Campaigning Teach-In* on (and to mark the publication of) the *Bruntland Report* (by the UN's World Commission on Environment & Development). Regent's College, Regent's Pk. London NW1. Creche provided.

May 10th: *Spring Conference of the British Assoc. for Nature Conservationists*. Theme is 'The Ecological Conscience - Values & ethics in British Conservation'. Details: Rick Minter, 20 Clayton Rd., Jesmond, Newcastle NE2 4RP Tel. 091-281-8245

May 21-25th: *"Networking in Mind, Body & Spirit"*. Festival for Mind, Body & Spirit, London Horticultural Halls, London.

May 22nd-24th (Whitsun w/end): *"Linking Local Communities"* Conference. To help establish a countrywide network structure for information/resources/community centres. Workshops will include computer networking, Community Arts, and Local Unemployment Initiatives. Details from Glastonbury Resources & Information Centre, Assembly Rms., High St., Glastonbury, Somerset. Tel. 0458-34677.

June 4th, 7.30pm: *TOES Rally for Urban Regeneration*. Friends Hse., Euston Rd., London NW1

July 15-17th: *TOES Local Economic Development & Community Social Initiatives*. Oxford. **July 17-28th:** *New University skill and knowledge sharing camp*. Address given above.

Aug. 28th-31st: *"Education for Life Conference"*. Organised by the Mediating Network. Details from Errol Masters, 10 Bramber Cr., Eaton Gdns., Hove, E.Sussex BN3 3TS Tel. 0273-723362. It will also double as Mediating N/w International event.

Please send in news and details of your events

INROADS

"Inroads" will be an occasional feature in *Green Options*. It will cover ideas for (and experiences of) effective ways of spreading the green message to "ordinary" people and new areas of society. How do we make green politics far more relevant to the everyday lives of most people? What are the attractive, constructive alternatives which can begin to engage genuinely popular support and involvement? Perhaps the answers are more difficult than simply opposing unpopular or un-green policies; they certainly relate to a very neglected aspect of green politics. Get in touch if you have information or ideas - minor snippets or major schemes - along these lines.

Here's an example, taken from a newsletter linked to the *Getting Together* forums of the Australian green movement.* Greens in a particular area arrange dinner parties (on a rotating basis), inviting a good proportion of guests from the "conventional" world, neighbours perhaps. This approach can be adapted for improved links between local greens, provided the guests - chosen from a previously circulated list - include some greens unknown to the host.

CONNECTIONS

In each issue the contact addresses of various kinds of groups and organisations will be listed. Where large numbers are involved, the addresses will be spread over more than one issue. **Listed here are some of the Green Groups/Alliances.** These are generally *local cross-party/non-party groupings*, arraigned under a Green banner which is of itself highly political, but structured or orientated so as to attract a wider circle of support than might otherwise be the case.



Andover Greens
Sophie Harrington-Elmore
11 The Grove,
Penton Grafton,
Andover, Hants.

Ayr Green Group
Susan Shearer
42 Caerlaverock Rd.
Prestwick,
Ayr, Scotland KA7 2DR
0292-79504

Callington & District Green Group
Nigel Miles
1 Rose Terrace
St. Ann's Chapel,
Gunnislake, Cornwall PL18
0822-833626

Canterbury Green Group
Steve Dawe
12 Clyde St.
Canterbury
Kent

Cardiff Green Group
Ann Lukes
92 Kings Rd.
Canton
Cardiff, Wales CF1 9DD
0222-21841

City of London Green Group
Iain Newton
8 Seymour Court,
Whitehall Rd., Chingford,
London E4 6DZ

Cleveland Green Action
Stuart Johnson
c/o 81 Thornfield Rd.,
Linthorpe, Middlesbrough
Cleveland TS5 5BX

Comhaontas Glas (Green Alliance)
5a Upper Fownes Street
Dublin 2,
Eire

East Dorset Greens
Steve Kenyon (Treasurer)
9 Sandringham Rd.,
Parkstone, Poole,
Dorset

Green Collective
Bruce Garrard
c/o PO Box 23,
Glastonbury,
Somerset

Green Forum
John Summerville
95 Bisley Rd.,
Stroud,
Glos. GL5 1HQ
04536-77972

Greenwatch
Cath Smith
13 Solway View,
Sunny Hill, Whitehaven,
Cumbria CA28 7HL
0946-64733

Herne Bay Green Group
10 Essex Ave
Studd Hill, Herne Bay
Kent
0227-372519

Horsham Green Group
Trevor King
97 Oakhill Rd.
Horsham
W.Sussex RH13 5LH

Humberside Green Alliance
Betty Whitwell
3 Thorngarth La.,
Barrow-on-Humber,
S.Humberside DN19 7AW
0469-30721

Llantrisant Green Group
Jan Hilltout
9 High St.
Llantrisant,
Mid-Glamorgan
0443-223158

Norwich Peaceful Green Cooperative Ltd
Music House Lane
King St., Julian's Hall
Norwich, Norfolk
0603-27875

Plymouth Green Collective
c/o Barbican Pannier Mkt,
Southside St., Plymouth,
Devon
0752-21256

West London Green Umbrella
Tim Cooper/Ian Broderick
25 Dukes Ave
London
N4
01-994-8371

Wirral Green Alliance
Elaine Corlett
12 James St., Oxtan,
Birkenhead,
Merseyside
051-652-3166

Please send in any up-dates or additions to this listing.

* NB. In a few cases a group may operate as both a branch of the Green Party and as a wider Green Group. (As part of the evolving debate concerning the political-structural options facing the green movement, a future article will look at the complexities and experiences of such an approach.)

OWL PROWL

The London Wildlife Trust has recently completed a year-long *Owl Prowl*, whose findings suggest that more than 300 owls, of five different types, live in the capital, with the population growing in the outer boroughs. However, the square-mile City of London borough has been deserted by the owl, that symbol of wisdom.
Guardian, Jan. 28th '87

RECYCLING

We encourage the recycling of any material in *Green Options*, though an acknowledgement of the source(s) would be appreciated.

SUBSCRIPTION FORM - FOR YOU, OR A SURPRISE GIFT FOR YOUR FRIENDS!

I enclose £5.50 for one year's subscription (eight issues) to Green Options. Send it to my/my friend's address below. Or, I enclose 65p, please send a sample copy to a friend.

NAME ADDRESS

Airmail rates: Europe 7; Aus/NZ 8.50; USA 9.50; Elsewhere - please write in.

Green Options, 12 Polden View, Glastonbury, Somerset BA6 8DZ